

Essex County Council  
**Green Infrastructure**  
**Environment & Climate Action**  
C4 County Hall  
Chelmsford  
Essex CM1 1QH



Planning Inspectorate  
Planning Services

Date: 12/07/2022  
Our Ref: GI - 000035  
Your Ref: UTT/22/1474/PINS

**Consultation Response** – UTT/22/1474/PINS - Land east of Parsonage Road, and south of Hall Road, Stansted, Essex, CM22 6PL

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your email which provides Essex County Council (ECC) with the opportunity to assess and advise on the proposed landscape and green infrastructure (GI) strategy/plans for the aforementioned planning application.

ECC currently provides advice on green infrastructure schemes (GI) for major developments. ECC have been consultees on GI since 2018. Although there are no statutory requirements for GI, the 25 Year Environment Plan and emerging Environment Bill will place significant importance on protecting and enhancing GI, accessibility and biodiversity net gain.

In providing advice we look to ensure that adequate provision, protection and improvements of high-quality GI comply with the objectives and planning principles set out in the following documents:

- Local Planning Authorities (LPA) Green Infrastructure Strategy/ SPD or equivalent green and open space strategies provides further guidance on the LPA's Local Development Plan policies regarding the Council's approach to green infrastructure provision in the local authority area.
- Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy, 2020, aims to enhance the urban and rural environment, through creating connected multi-functional GI that delivers multiple benefits to people and wildlife. It meets the County Council's aspirations to improve GI and green spaces in our towns, city and villages, especially close to areas of deprivation.
- Essex Green Infrastructure Standards, 2021, aims to provide clear guidance on the requirements on both planning policy and planning application and processes.

### **ECC GI position**

Having reviewed the GI Strategy/ GI Plans/ES/ Design and Access Statement/Landscape plans/EIA/Masterplans and the associated documents which accompanied the planning application, **we do not object** to the granting of planning permission based on the following:

#### **Condition 1**

No works shall take place until a detailed Green Infrastructure Strategy/ Landscape Strategy for the site, based on the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy and Emerging GI Standards and an assessment of the ecological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by a landscape specialist from the local planning authority. The scheme should include but not be limited to:

- The development should be designed to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain and wider environmental net gains, that forms an important component of nature recovery networks and the wider landscape scale GI network. A biodiversity net gain full calculation should be provided alongside the biodiversity net gain figures that have been provided.
- Full details should be provided of specific planting details as part of finalised application details.

***Reason:***

GI and its connectivity are to be at the heart of decision making at every stage in the planning and design process for all developments from the outset, thus GI is integral to place shaping. Planning and design of GI will ensure individual building, street, neighbourhood and landscape scale intervention features contribute to a coherent, meaningful and practical network of high-quality and multi-functional GI, that will provide multiple environment, social and economic benefits within the development and wider area. By ensuring good early design in light of the local context and including local policy context, the GI will more effectively meet local priorities and needs.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 paragraph 8c sets environmental protection and enhancement as one of the 3 objectives of the planning system. Paragraph 98 states that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.

**Condition 2**

No development shall take place until a Green Infrastructure Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted Plans shall include:

- Details of advance planting around construction sites; and
- The timescale for the implementation of each aspect of Green Infrastructure within that phase of development and details of the quality standard of construction and maintenance.

The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

### **Condition 3**

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by SuDS and landscape specialists at the Local Planning Authority a landscape ecological management and maintenance plan and work schedule for a minimum of 10 years.

Details should include who is responsible for GI assets (including any surface water drainage system) and the maintenance activities/frequencies.

We would also expect details on how management company services for the maintenance of GI assets and green spaces shall be funded and managed for the lifetime of the development to be included.

#### ***Reason:***

To ensure appropriate management and maintenance arrangements and funding mechanisms are put in place to maintain high-quality value and benefits of the GI assets.

Failure to provide the above required information before commencement of works may result in reducing the value of the development, becoming an undesirable place to live that may increase the impacts from climate change, such as flood risk or air pollution from the site.

### **Condition 4**

The applicant or any successor in title must maintain yearly logs of maintenance which should be carried out in accordance with any approved Maintenance Plan. These must be available for inspection upon a request by the Local Planning Authority.

#### ***Reason:***

To ensure the GI are maintained for the lifetime of the development as outlined in any approved Maintenance Plan so that they continue to function as intended to ensure the high-quality and multi-functional benefits of GI assets.

Any questions raised within this response should be directed to the applicant and the response should be provided to the Essex GI Team for further consideration. If you are minded to approve the application contrary to this advice, we request that you contact us to allow further discussion and/or representations from us.

**INFORMATIVES:**

- Any GI features proposed for adoption by Essex County Council should be consulted on with the relevant Highways Development Management Office.
- It is not within the scope of the GI team to comment on the overall viability of a scheme as the decision is based on a range of issues which are outside of this authority's area of expertise.
- We will advise on the acceptability of green infrastructure and the information submitted on planning applications based on the key documents listed within this letter. However any relevant information relating to green infrastructure submitted as part of any previous applications should be submitted with the updated information.
- The GI consultation responses provide a high-level review of the proposals onsite. However the relevant specialists e.g ecology and landscape specialists should still be consulted on the information submitted. It should be noted that detailed discharge of condition applications should be referred to technical specialists rather than the GI planning team.

**Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.**

Yours sincerely,

Richard Horswill  
Team: Green Infrastructure  
Service: Environment and Climate Action  
Essex County Council